

THE Churchman's Monthly Magazine

[Vol. III.]

MAY 1866.

[No. 5.]

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THAT WHICH IS OF GOD, HE GIVETH TO THE UNDERSTANDING OF THEM
WHICH HE WILLETH. THAT WHICH IS OF MEN, HE GIVETH TO THEM
WHICH HE WILLETH. — COLOSS. II. 12.

NEW-HAVEN:
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THE
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[Vol. III.]

MAY, 1806.

[No. 5.]

REFLECTIONS FOR MAY.

WONDERFUL are the ways of God! Mysterious the operations of his hands! In vain the philosopher pries into the secrets of nature! In vain he tasks his skill to find out and explain the reason of the most common and familiar events; those which are perpetually falling under our notice. Dead of late was the vegetable world: Not a leaf in the forest, nor a spire of grass on the plain. But look now and see what a mighty change is taking place. The groves are putting on their richest attire. The orchard and the fruit-garden are expanding their blossoms; and the meadow and the lawn are clothed in green. Whence comes this to pass? In the pride of science we may be tempted to answer, from the united power of heat and moisture. But is this saying any thing to the purpose? Go then, wonder-working science, and make, if you can, a single seed, which, when put in the earth, shall shoot up and grow. Produce, if you are able, a single plant, which, after enduring the winter's cold, with returning May shall bud and blossom. If you cannot do this, talk not of accounting for the operations of nature. Boast not of skill in the secret moving cause of vegetative life; but shrink back, and with humility say, (as we are taught to do of ourselves) these things are *fearfully and wonderfully made*; and with infinite wisdom are they preserved in their course. He who formed is every where present, and continually exerting his influence. It is he who communicates the subtle spring, by which the forest-tree opens its buds and expands its trembling leaves. By the same influence is unfolded every flower that dazzles in the sun-beam, and loads the air with odours. By him each spire of grass and every useful plant shoots up: for he hath given *to every seed his own body, as it hath pleased him*. Clouds and darkness are, indeed, round about the habitation of his throne, and we may say in a great measure so, about the operation of his hands in these distant regions of his kingdom. But what then? We know he is every where present, every where exerting his power and wisdom. He says, let the wilderness bud and blossom, and it is so. He commands the earth to bring forth abundantly, and he is obeyed; for all things serve him. This is enough for piety to know; enough to enkindle devotion and love, to awaken gratitude and praise. Reason demands, religion dictates, and unfeigned piety will render, a tribute of homage and

thanksgiving to that power, by whom reviving spring returns to cheer the plains, and spread abroad the earnest of his bounty, the forerunners of a plentiful crop of the necessities and delicacies of the present life.

Lose not then, in heedless inattention, the present season, so apt to inspire devotion, and beget real love of God. When now the softened air breathes along the lonely vale, loaded with fragrance, there delight to walk. When the leafy forest is sending forth its odours, and is made vocal by the cheerful song of birds from every spray, be hushed the cares of life; let not scenes of intemperate mirth and festivity intrude, but be still and listen to the voice of God, resounding in your ears. When the shades of evening are spread around, and the nightingale is pouring forth her shrill notes, join in the song, in praise to him who made and preserves you both. In the morning, shake off dull sloth; arise with the lark, and behold her soaring and singing towards heaven, and with her pour forth your morning hymns of praise. When even the inanimate vegetable is rising in cheerful attire, and looking up to heaven, will you not look up and lift up your heart in praise? When every sense is filled and gratified, will you not be thankful to the giver of all good? When all living creatures rejoice, will you not lend them your aid, and join in the chorus of thanksgiving? While the gentle rill murmurs along the glade, seeming to rejoice that it is unbarred from the icy fetters of winter, and undisturbed by the noisy deluges of rain, that descend in early spring—while the broad river in louder, yet soothing strains, lifts up its voice in praise to him who made and supports the course of nature, stupid must be the heart that doth not catch the spirit of devotion and silent adoration. While even the brute earth breathes incense to the great Lord of all for the return of this pleasant month, cold must be the bosom that doth not glow with rapture to the God of seasons. If the bursting bud, the opening flower, the rising corn, and luxuriant pasture cannot warm your affections, and inspire you with sentiments of piety, claim no more to be lord of this lower world, but resign your pretensions to the innocent lamb that gambols round the green, or the dumb ox that rejoices in his enlargement from the stall, and eyes with grateful heart the wide spread feast on which he grazes.

This rich variety was not appointed by the wise author of all things purely for its own sake. The opening flowers display not their gaudiness merely to please the eye; to send forth their odours to gratify, for a few moments, our animal sense, and then to be no more. The melody of birds was not given them only for their or our amusement. The whole changing scene was not contrived for no purpose but to constitute a round of sublunary things, to rise and evanescent disappear; it were an impeachment of God's wisdom so to deem. No, they are contrived to make a lasting impression on the immortal soul; they teach us to aspire after joys more durable, pleasures more stable, satisfactions more capable of filling the desires of one who knows he is always to exist. Lose not then negligently the impression which these things are intended to make upon your heart. Look attentively round you on the animating scene: behold

the high mounting sun, pouring down his yet mild beams at the command of his creator : see the gentle dews and rains descend, as instruments in his hand ; causing the earth to put forth her productions. Mark each passing day with its mild radiance, an emblem of that heart in which the peace of God reigns ; of that soul from whence is banished the storms of sinful desires, the tempests of envy, anger and revenge ; into which the sun of righteousness shines, and the dews of divine grace are plentifully poured. Cloudless, calm, and serene is such a soul. In such a heart every virtue springs and flourishes as the grass of the field. Some there are indeed, into whose souls the mortal poison of sin has struck so deep, and so chilled their moral feelings, that naught can animate them to the spirit of devotion. But every sincere Christian who has opened his heart to the impressions of God's spirit, who loves and practices, from his soul, the duties of religion, finds his devotion kindle and grow warm with the charms of the passing season. He catches the seraphic fire of love to God, and good will to men. In heart and disposition he partakes of what he beholds around him. He becomes mild and gentle, easy to be entreated, full of compassion and good fruits.

The devotions that are payed to Almighty God in the Church, in the congregation of the faithful, even by the best disposed, are too apt, without continued effort, to grow languid and formal. But in that spacious temple which is now adorned, by the great author of nature, with such exquisite art, adoration arises spontaneously ; it forces itself on the heart that is accustomed to devout exercises. The author of such a profusion of blessings to every creature, as are pouring around must be good and wise, great and worthy of all adoration. These reflections seize the mind and hurry it away to the fountain of life, of light and joy. Deem not then the time thrown away which shall be dedicated to a walk in the flowery field, or beneath the shady grove filled with the music of birds : but go often and muse on all the works of God, his marvellous loving kindness and wisdom ; and join the chorus of reanimating nature in songs of praise, in devout ejaculations of the heart, which are as incense of a sweet smelling savour to him who dwells on high.

But the passing season in a more peculiar manner is instructive to youth, for here they may behold an emblem of themselves. How gay the face of nature ! With what a rich variety of colours is it decorated ! Pass but a few days, and where will be these splendid ornaments ? They will fade, wither, fall, and be no more seen. Mark each shooting plant, how vigourous, how rapid its growth ! But soon mature summer is coming, when it will cease to spring, droop its head, cast its seed and die. Just such is the condition of man. Boast not then the lillies and roses of a fair countenance. Value not too inordinately the activity of youth ; but remember that maturity of years is soon coming, when far other excellencies will be needed and expected. The vegetable flower was intended by the great Creator to be the forerunner of fruits ; no less so is the flower of youth. A chilling frost or blighting wind may derange this order of nature, and just so is it with man. Death may interpose, and altogether destroy the stock on which there is a promising show of fruit to ripen

in due time ; or perverse passions and unhallowed appetites, the temptations of a sinful world may blast the fair prospect, and cut off every useful production ; so that they who seek fruit will find only bitter, unpalatable, and unwholesome leaves. How melancholy the reflexion when this is the case in the vegetable world ! How far more so when we observe it in the moral ! When we see youth and beauty devoted to a round of sensual pleasures, and sinful gratifications ; to vanity and folly, without concern for the momentous interests of eternity ; without religion, and sentiments of piety towards God. Such a course, at mature years, can afford nothing but mortification and disappointment, sorrow and regret ; without one stable comfort on which to rest the soul. Guard then against the allurements of pleasure, against an inordinate love of worldly good, of ambitious greatness ; against the corroding passions of envy and malevolence, which will surely blast all the blossoms of youth, and make them unfruitful. Consider the mildness and serenity of the present season. Drink its spirit into your tempers, and copy it in your actions. Let the profusion of delights, which are poured around you, exalt your hearts in gratitude to the great giver of all good. Let them cherish and invigorate in you sentiments of beneficence and good-will, that holy and heavenly temper of love, which alone can fit you to be finally transplanted into a region where reigns one eternal spring, a cloudless sky, and the countenance of the Lord God for a perpetual light.

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FOR THE CHURCHMAN'S MAGAZINE.

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THE CLERGYMAN'S FAREWELL ADDRESS TO HIS PARISHIONERS.

AND now since in some sort, I stand in the same situation with the Apostle when he uttered the emphatic words of the text ; since *I know that all ye, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more*, in that relation which I have held towards you ; since I this day take my leave of you, as one appointed to minister to you in holy things, I must be indulged a few minutes, while I endeavour to impress on your minds the infinite importance of those truths, that whole counsel of God which we have received from Jesus Christ and his Apostles. It doth not indeed become me to exclaim with St. Paul, *I am free from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God* ; but thus much I may confidently say, that wherein soever I may have deviated from these great truths, it has been unintentional. If in any thing I have come short, either in my private or public administrations, it hath not been from lack of desire to lead you into all necessary truth ; and I pray God to pardon my defects, and prevent their being injurious to the soul of any one, of whose spiritual concerns I have had the oversight and charge.

And that I may not have laboured in vain, in any thing conformable to the mind and will of Christ, lend, I beseech you, a listening ear, and an attentive mind to the following interesting considerations. Is it not the uniform doctrine of the New Testament, is it not every where taught in the *Liturgy* and *Offices* of the Church, that we are

fallen, depraved creatures? That *we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves*? That we cannot think a good thought, nor do a good act? That our hearts and desires are corrupt, and prone to evil? That by nature we are unholy and unclean before God? And let me further ask, are you not sensible, when you look into yourselves, that this is true? Do you not find in your members, a law warring against the law of your minds, *and bringing you into captivity to the law of sin and death*? Do you not find many unholy desires, many propensities, which you know to be contrary to the will of a holy God? And are you not therefore certainly fallen and depraved? Think it not enough that you in form admit the truth of all this. Be not contented with a cold assent of the mind to truths so important, but let them enter deep into your hearts, and engage your most serious meditations. They will make you meek and humble before God. They will dispose you into a frame and temper fit to receive the whole gospel dispensation. They will make you quick-sighted to discern that you cannot recover the lost image of God, nor reinstate yourselves in his favour; that of yourselves you are ruined and lost; that your own arm cannot bring you salvation; and that without help you must perish everlastingly.

Being thus humbled in your own view, you will see and feel the absolute need of a Saviour, and fly unto him who is offered, even Jesus Christ the Son of God; mighty *to save to the uttermost all who come unto him*, in sincerity and truth. You will behold him wounded for your sins, and bruised for your iniquities. You will see that by his stripes alone you may be healed; by his all-atoning blood alone, your transgressions can be washed away. Keep ever in mind his wondrous goodness, and how great things he has done for you; and he will be to you (in the beautiful language of the Prophet) *as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land*. You will be ever crying out, *behold, O God, and look upon the face of thine anointed*; the shield of our Salvation, and our tower of refuge in the evil day. You will hear him, in heart-cheering language, saying, *come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*. Let this kind invitation sink into your hearts, and warm your sluggish affections, and you will know and feel what is the breadth, and length, and heighth, and depth of the love of God; what it is to *find rest unto your souls*; what a blessed rest; what a haven of peace is opened for you in the atoning sacrifice of Christ our Lord: Where there is no conscious guilt to molest, no terrors of God to disturb, and no fear to startle; but all is serenity and calmness. This is what the scriptures term *the peace of God*; what nothing earthly can give, nor take away. Without this humble, yet confident reliance on the great work of atonement, there is no Christianity: Religion has not reached further than the external profession; it has not warmed the heart and affections; and can produce no zeal, no care or concern for the institutions of God, nor any perseverance in the practice of moral duty to one another.

But if you have really renounced dependence on yourselves, and taken refuge in him who is able and willing to afford you aid; if you have laid here the foundation of your religion, knowing that it is God

who worketh in you by his spirit, you will march on firmly in the Christian course; you will labour and strive with the same alacrity and zeal as if the whole success depended on yourselves. Having such a guide as the grace of God, who would not diligently seek? Having such a helper, who would not labour? who would not put to all his endeavours to run with patience the race set before him? Relying firmly on such a faith, if you fall before the assaults of temptation, you will be able to rise again with renewed vigour; for *they who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.* In the strength of the Lord God, and in the power of his might they shall not fail. In him be ye strong, be zealous. Let your zeal be that which worketh peace, godliness and charity. Let it be that of fervent piety towards God, and good-will to men, and it cannot be too warm; for it is good to be *zealously affected in a good thing.*

Animated with a zeal of this description, the sacred ordinances of the gospel will become your delight. You will see in them the means of grace; that God's Holy Spirit works in and through them to confirm your faith, to invigourate the divine life of the soul; to renew and beautify the lost divine image, and make you *holy in all manner of conversation.* Thus will your devotions both public and private be ardent and sincere. The house of God, the place where his honour dwells, will be your pleasure; and you will not forget to come together, and when here your service will not be that of the lips only; but your whole souls will be interested and drawn out to God in prayer and praise. Glowing affection, and ardent longing after righteousness and purity will accompany every petition; and unbounded gratitude will swell your notes of praise to the Father of Spirits and author of all good.

In the exercise of such a faith and such a practice, you will be able to look forward to a future world with complacency and confident hope. That blessed abode which is set open before you in the gospel, will be much in your contemplation. Sweet will be your meditations upon divine things; great your comfort in the promises of God. The crown of rejoicing which he shall give to all that love and fear him, will be kept perpetually in view, arming you with patience, and inspiring you with holy resolution. Trained in such a school, when the hour of your dissolution shall approach, when you come to stand on the verge of eternity, glorious will be your prospects; serene your hopes. The world and all its joys will fade from your closing eyes without regret. Eternity will open on your view, with its seats of infinite bliss. And then you will take your departure to realms, where the weary be at rest, and all the children of God find peace and everlasting joy.

Have I now been speaking of trifles unworthy your notice and concern, or are they things of infinite moment? Are they unworthy of credit, or eternal truths? You profess to believe them true, and that no truths can be more interesting to your temporal and everlasting welfare. Think then I beseech you, my brethren, O think of these things before they be hidden from your eyes! Make them

the subject of your daily meditations. Cherish them in your hearts ; live by them. Let them rule and reign over all your actions.—*Awake thou that sleepest, and Christ shall give thee light.* Go on, ye that are already awake. *Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.* Reach forth and press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling ; then will you secure to yourselves a retreat from the day of evil, and the hour of calamity. Then may you retire to a quiet hiding place, which stupid sinners know not of. Buoyed above the scenes of this changing world, on the wings of faith, you may sit serene with the storm of evils beneath your feet ; that storm in which so many heedless sons of men are overwhelmed and lost. Grateful also will be your enjoyment of the good things of time. Viewed as coming from that God who is the giver of all good, you will receive them with love, praise, and thanksgiving. Halt not then between two opinions, whether you shall serve the world or the Lord Jesus Christ. Time is fast flying away, and if you make not your choice soon, it will be too late. Soon shall the hour arrive when both you and I shall be summoned from this mortal scene, to give an account of ourselves : I for the fidelity with which I have discharged my office towards you, and you for the use you have made of my admonitions. Solemn and awful will be the summons ! Dreadful our doom, if we are found wanting ! But triumphant, if our Lord shall say to us, *well done, good and faithful servant.* Let us then make a solemn pause, and look back upon the few short years in which we have walked together to the house of God. Let us beseech Almighty God to pardon us wherein we have done amiss ; and mutually forgive each other, if in any thing we have discovered a want of duty. Let us call solemnly on God, in this his house of worship, to witness the sincerity of our hearts, that the connection which has subsisted may be dissolved in mutual harmony and good will.

And what shall I more say ? the time is come in which I am to take my leave of you. For all the favours I have received from any of you, I pray God to reward you in the day of account ; and give you grace to follow with a glad mind, whatsoever I have taught you agreeable to his will. Shun divisions and animosities ; shun the spirit of this world which gendereth strife. Be at amity and peace ; be courteous and kind, one towards another ; let the peace of God reign in your hearts ; *Forget not the assembling yourselves together, as the manner of some is.* Take the earliest opportunity to place yourselves under the care of some one appointed to minister in holy things ; that you may not be scattered abroad as sheep without a shepherd. *Be not carried about with every wind of doctrine ;* but stand fast in the faith ye have professed. Serve God in simplicity and godly sincerity, with one heart and one mouth : *pray for the peace of Jerusalem, for they shall prosper that love thee.* May peace be within these walls, and prosperity within your dwellings. *For my brethren and companions' sake, I will now say, peace be within thee.* *Be ye steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.* Thus may you be *built up an holy temple in the Lord.* May you grow and prosper, a blessing to each other, and to society among whom you dwell. May the spirit of God dwell in you richly. May

his grace be in the midst of you, and sanctify you throughout in heart, soul, and body; may he purify you unto himself, a peculiar people, zealous of good works. As a parish, and as individuals, may his holy Providence ever surround you, and protect you from calamities. And may the spirit of his love and holy fear ever remain in your hearts, to comfort you while in this vale of tears, and at length to guide you to the realms of eternal triumph. Farewel! God be with you. And to his holy name let us ascribe all honour and praise, adoration and thanksgiving, both now and ever. Amen, and amen.



EXPOSITION OF THE ARTICLES OF THE CHURCH.

ARTICLE II.

OF THE WORD, OR SON OF GOD, WHICH WAS MADE VERY MAN.

“THE Son, which is the word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man’s nature in the womb of the blessed virgin of her substance; so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the godhead and manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man; who truly suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice not only for original guilt, but also for actual sins of men.”

The second person in the holy trinity is distinguished by the name of the Son, that is, “the Son of God.” It is sometimes said that the phrase, “Son of God,” admits of various significations, and is used metaphorically in scripture; but this observation cannot affect the argument which may be derived from it concerning our Saviour, as it cannot be denied that the Jews, in his time, affixed to this expression a determinate and particular meaning, applicable only to the divine nature, and in this sense we shall find it was claimed by Christ, and understood to be so both by his disciples and by his enemies: *Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his (proper) Father, making himself equal with God....* John v. 18. Upon our Lord’s declaring to the Jews, *I and my Father are one*, they took up stones to stone him, saying, *For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy; and because that thou being a man, makest thyself God; and our Lord’s answer proves this to be only an equivalent expression with the assertion that he was the Son of God, Say ye, thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?....* John x. 30, 33, 36. When Pilate would have released Jesus, declaring *he found no fault in him*, the Jews answered him, *We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God....* John xix. 7. Thus it appears that our Lord suffered death, according to the Jewish law, as a blasphemer, because avowing himself to be the Son of God, he was clearly understood to represent himself as equal with God. This circumstance must, I think, be allowed as alone sufficient to prove that the Jews understood the title of “Son of God,” in the sense of absolute divinity, but it does not prove that they expected the Messiah to be the Son of God. And when the Jews asked

our Lord, *Art thou greater than our father Abraham which is dead ; and the prophets which are dead ; whom makest thou thyself ?* he answered, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am. Then took they up stones to cast at him...* John viii. 53, 58, 59. for they clearly understood this expression as agreeing with the sense in which he had called God his Father.

And we find the converts to the religion of Christ, expressly declaring their faith in terms, which not only directly acknowledged their belief, that Jesus was *the Christ*, but that he was also *the Son of God*. Nathaniel, that true Israelite, confessed Jesus to be the Messiah in these words : *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God ; thou art the King of Israel...* John i. 49. And Martha said, *I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God...* John xi. 27.

St. John in the beginning of his gospel, speaks of Christ under the name of *the word*. *In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God*. The expression, *In the beginning was the word*, must mean that the word existed from all eternity ; that is, the word of the Father was begotten from everlasting of the Father, since St. John is referring to times not only prior to the birth of Christ, but also to the creation of the world. *And the word was with God*, that is, the word was united with the Father, or was of one substance with the Father. *I and my Father are one...* John x. 30, was a declaration of Christ himself, recorded by this same evangelist. *And the word was God*, or the very and eternal God. *The same was in the beginning with God*, that is, the word was united with the Father from all eternity. *All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made*. This proves that by the word St. John means Christ,* since the creation of the world is in scripture repeatedly attributed to Christ,† and consequently the word being made flesh, was Jesus Christ. It is also a farther proof of the divinity of Christ, since none but God can create : *He that built all things is God...* Heb. iii. 4. We have before seen that the creation of the world is attributed to God the Father, which is an additional proof of an incomprehensible identity, or unity of substance between the Father and the Son.

What has been already stated concerning the sense in which we are to understand the title of the Son of God, and the assertion of St. John in the beginning of his gospel, concerning the word, may be considered as a sufficient illustration of the former part of this article ; “the Son, which is the word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father.”

The article in the next place states, that Christ took man's nature in the womb of the blessed virgin of her substance. Isaiah foretold that the Messiah should be born of a virgin : *A virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his name Emanuel...* Isaiah vii. 14. and St. Matthew informs us, *that when Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost...* Mat.

* St. John also calls Christ the word of God in Rev. iii. 5.

† See Heb. i. 2 and 10. 1 Cor. viii. 6. Col. i. 16, and Ephes. iii. 4.

i. 18. It appears from the history of Christ's life and ministry contained in the Gospels, that, except his miraculous conception and his freedom from sin, he was in all things like unto man; he was born and grew up like other infants; he increased in wisdom, as he increased in stature. *Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same...* Heb. ii. 14. *In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren...* Heb. ii. 17. *There is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus...* 1 Tim. ii. 5. The complete nature of man being thus assumed by the eternal word of God, it follows that by this incarnation, two whole and perfect natures, that is, the godhead and manhood, were joined together in one person.

This consideration of the union of the two natures, divine and human, in Christ, can alone enable us to reconcile many passages in the New Testament, which are apparently contradictory. Christ is said to have existed before Abraham, and yet to have been of the seed of Abraham: He is called the Lord of David, and also his son or descendant: He is said to know all things, and yet not to know when the day of judgment will be. Christ says, *My Father is greater than I*; and again, *My Father and I are one*. These and many other passages of a similar nature become perfectly consistent and intelligible, by referring them respectively to the divine and human natures of Christ. The essential properties of one nature were not communicated to the other nature; Christ was at once Son of God, and Son of Man; he was at the same time both mortal and eternal; mortal as the Son of Man, in respect of his humanity; eternal as the Son of God, in respect of his divinity; each kept his respective properties distinct, without the least confusion in their most intimate union. Christ has ascended up into heaven, and is there to remain *until the final restitution of all things...* Acts iii. 21—*he ever liveth to make intercession for us...* Heb. vii. 25. And indeed is it reasonable, that the personal glory of Christ should cease, when the happiness which he purchased for fallen man by his incarnation and passion is eternal? Upon these grounds the article asserts that the two natures, the godhead and manhood, whereof is one Christ, are never to be divided. The godhead and manhood of Christ having been both proved, it follows that he was very God and very man.

That the Messiah was to suffer, was foretold in a variety of passages in the Old Testament: *It was written of the Son of Man, that he must suffer many things...* Mark, ix. 12. and, *the spirit of God, which was in the prophets, testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ...* 1 Peter i. 11. He was to be a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; oppressed and afflicted; wounded and crucified; brought to the slaughter, and cut off out of the land of the living... Isaiah liii. and therefore those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath fulfilled... Acts xi. 18.

And as Christ truly suffered, so likewise he was crucified and dead. The particular mode of Christ's death was predicted by Zechariah, *They shall look upon me whom they have pierced...* Zech.

xii. 10. and again by David, *they pierced my hands and my feet...* Psalm xxii. 16. alluding to the practice of nailing to the cross the hands and the feet of the person crucified. That Jesus really expired on the cross, was evident both to his faithful friends, who out of regard to their Lord and Master, were present at his crucifixion, and also to his implacable enemies, who fancied that they then saw the accomplishment of their wicked purpose. And even the Roman soldiers, who probably felt little either of affection or malice, seeing him already dead, forbore to break his legs; but *one of these soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water...* John xix. 34. which is a known sign of actual death in human bodies.

The mention of the grave of the Messiah in the following passage of Isaiah, may be considered as a prediction that he was to be buried: *He was cut off out of the land of the living; and he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death...* Isaiah liii. 8, 9. And not only the burial of the Messiah, but the time he was to remain interred, was typified in the person of Jonas, *for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.* It was the custom of the Romans, by whose authority our Saviour was put to death, not to allow the bodies of those who were crucified to be taken from the cross and buried; they were left to putrify, or to be devoured by the fowls of the air. But it was in the power of the magistrate to dispense with this custom; and accordingly we find that *when the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple; he went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered; and when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed...* Mat. xxvii. 57, &c. and thus it appears that Christ was buried.

The article concludes with stating, that the object of Christ's passion was to reconcile the Father to us, and to be a sacrifice not only for original guilt, but also for actual sins of men. By original guilt, is meant that guilt which was incurred by the disobedience of Adam, and transmitted to his posterity; and by actual sins of men, are meant those sins which individuals actually commit; *For there is no man that sinneth not...* I Kings, viii. 46. I shall transcribe a part of Bishop Burnet's excellent explanation and proof of this part of the article, to which it will be unnecessary to make any addition: "The notion of an expiatory sacrifice, which was then, when the New Testament was written, well understood all the world over, both by Jew and Gentile, was this, that the sin of one person was transferred on a man or beast, who was upon that devoted and offered up to God, and suffered in the room of the offending person; and by this offering, the punishment of the sin being laid on the sacrifice, an expiation was made for sin, and the sinner was believed to be reconciled to God. This, it appears, through the whole book of Leviticus, was the design and effect of the sin and trespass

offerings among the Jews, and more particularly of the goat that was offered up for the sins of the whole people on the day of atonement. This was a piece of religion well known, both to Jew and Gentile, that had a great many phrases belonging to it, such as the sacrifices being offered for, or instead of sin, and becoming sin or the sin offering; its bearing of sin and becoming sin, or the sin offering; its being the reconciliation, the atonement, and the redemption of the sinner, by which the sin was no more imputed, but forgiven, and for which the sinner was accepted. Christ is called *the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world*... John i. 29, and it is said, *he suffered once for sin, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God*—1 Peter, iii. 18. In these, and in a great many more passages that lie spread in all the parts of the New Testament, it is as plain as words can make any thing, that the death of Christ is proposed to us as our sacrifice and reconciliation, our atonement and redemption. The meaning of which is this, that God, intending to reconcile the world to himself, and to encourage sinners to repent and turn to him, thought fit to offer the pardon of sin, together with the other blessings of his gospel, in such a way as should demonstrate both the guilt of sin, and his hatred of it; and yet with that, his love of sinners, and his compassion towards them.

“There remains but one thing to be remembered here, though it will come to be more especially explained when other articles are to be opened; which is, that this reconciliation, which is made by the death of Christ between God and man, is not absolute and without conditions. He has established the covenant, and has performed all that was incumbent on him, as both the priest and the sacrifice, to do and to suffer; and he offers this to the world, that it may be closed with by them on the terms on which it is proposed; and if they do not accept of it upon these conditions, and perform what is enjoined them, they can have no share in it.”*

To the Editor of the *CHURCHMAN'S MAGAZINE*.

OBSERVING with regret that no account of the Life and Character of the late excellent Bishop PARKER, has appeared in the *Magazine*, I have sent you Mr. Gardiner's Sermon, delivered at his funeral, which I wish you to insert in the *Magazine* as soon as convenient.

AMICUS.

* *HEBREWS* xiii. v. 7.

Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

THE Apostle directs us in these words, to cherish the memory of our spiritual guides, of whom death has deprived us; that influenced by their example, we may adhere to their faith, and imitate their virtues.

The instances of mortality among the elder clergy of this town

* Burnet.

and its vicinity, within these few years, have been numerous and striking.

Five eminent clergymen of Boston,* at the head of large and respectable congregations, with two distinguished officers of the University, have experienced the stroke of death; and we are now assembled, my brethren, to lament another victim of his power, not less to be regretted for the ardor of his piety, the soundness of his virtue, and the usefulness of his life. These events solemnly admonish us all of the frail and perishable tenure on which we hold our existence, and loudly exhort us to lead the life, that we may die the death of the righteous. In the mean time let us employ the short space allowed, ere we consign his mortal remains to their kindred earth, briefly to review the life and character of the deceased, that, inspired by his virtues, we may follow his faith, remembering the end of his conversation.

Bishop Parker was a native of Portsmouth, in New-Hampshire, and though educated in a different communion, grew early attached to the Episcopal form of worship. This attachment increased with his years; and after he had completed his academical education, and spent nine years in the honourable but laborious employment of tuition at Newburyport, Portsmouth and its vicinity, he sailed to England, for the purpose of receiving orders as an Episcopal clergyman.

On his return to America, he entered upon the office of assistant minister of this Church, for which he had been invited by the vestry to take orders, in 1773, where he gradually won the respect and affections of the congregation, by the solidity of his discourses and the virtues of his life. But he had not long been thus agreeably settled, when the disputes between the colonists and parent country arose to an alarming height, and the secret fire of animosity, which had gradually been kindled, burst into an open flame.

As the Episcopal Church had shared the royal bounty and favour, and in this country had always been unpopular, among the zealots of other religious persuasions, she naturally became an object of jealousy at this crisis, and her ministers the objects of resentment. Alarmed for their personal safety, in this moment of menace and peril, they fled. Mr. Parker alone remained, and constant to his duty, persevered in its execution, amidst the grossest insults, which often violated his ear, even when engaged in the most sacred offices of his profession. But supported by the spirit of conscientious rectitude, he sustained all these indignities unmoved, and continued publicly to pray for the sovereign, to whom he conceived allegiance due until the declaration of independence. It may be questioned how far this conduct was consistent with his usual prudence; but his conscientious intrepidity is doubtless highly deserving of admiration, ready as he was to sacrifice ease, property, and life itself to the disinterested discharge of his duty. Nor is the circumstance less honourable to the humanity of Bostonians, who, wrought up to the

* Dr. Walter, Dr. Clarke, Dr. Belknap, Dr. Thatcher, Dr. Howard, Dr. Willard, and Dr. Tappan.

highest pitch of resentment against the monarch, whom they conceived the chief author of their injuries, yet abstained from all violence against the person who publicly prayed for him. However they might differ from him in political opinion, they could not but respect his firmness, and the unspotted integrity of his character.

To the noble conduct of our deceased friend must doubtless be attributed the preservation of the Episcopal Church in this town. Nor was the spirit he displayed less disinterested than firm. Repeatedly did he refuse the rectorship of this Church; anxiously desirous of leaving open a door for the return of his senior colleague; and it was with difficulty, and after a considerable space of time, that he was prevailed on to accept it. From that moment he gave himself up to the promotion of its interests, and such were the efficacy of his preaching and the respectability of his character, that the pews of this Church have never been sufficient to answer the numerous demands for them. His reputation extended throughout the Union, and was rewarded with a Doctorate from a respectable University. He was looked up to as the head of the Episcopal Church in New-England, and inferior to no clergyman on the continent in the essential accomplishments of that sacred character. In whatever point of view we consider Bishop Parker, his loss will be long and severely felt, whether we regard him as a man, as a citizen, as a clergyman, as a husband, as a father.

As a man, he was endowed with great and distinguished virtues. With a sound understanding, he united a most humane and feeling heart. No child of misfortune was ever turned from his door without relief, and often have I seen him turn aside to conceal the tear of sensibility that had started in his eye at the appearance, or recital of distress, in which he had no reason to be peculiarly interested. To avarice he was an entire stranger: he despised money for its own sake, and valued it only as necessary to procure the conveniences of life, and relieve the wants of the poor and unfortunate. No clergyman in this country ever exercised more extensively the rites of hospitality. His doors were always open to his numerous friends and acquaintance, and his table spread for entertainment. He appeared to the greatest advantage under his own roof, where, in the presence of his numerous family, amidst the pleasures of social intercourse, he relieved the cares and fatigues of the day with cheerful and agreeable conversation. Those who were most interested in his welfare, would often hint to him the propriety of saving a portion of his income for the future support of his numerous family. But the generosity of his nature forever struggled with his conjugal affection and parental tenderness, and too frequently proved victorious in the contest. His rank in society and the profession of a gentleman, he considered, required a style of living rather beyond what is merely decent and necessary, and though his people were liberal, yet his income was not more than sufficient to satisfy the demands of a very large family, and his own sense of propriety. There was a general impression that he was a proud man, among those who knew him but slightly; but never was there a charge more unfounded. A certain loftiness of deportment, perhaps a little stiff-

ness of manners, and the occasional neglect of returning those salutations in the street, which the courtesies of life seem to require, might have given rise to this supposition, and can alone serve for its apology. For never did I know a human being who entertained a more humble opinion of himself, was more diffident of his own talents, or less inclined to give pain and offence to any living creature. What I here affirm, I affirm on my own personal knowledge and observation, and should consider flattery of any kind on this solemn occasion, the worst species of hypocrisy. Bishop Parker was a man of distinguished prudence, and this virtue in him was pure and unalloyed. It was entirely unmixed with cunning, the despicable vice of little minds and mean capacities. He scorned to gain a moment's popularity by a trick, and simulation and dissimulation he utterly disdained. His prudence was of the most approved kind, the result of naturally good feelings and intuitive good sense, which led him to think, and speak, and act the very thing he ought, and to support a character of dignity and propriety at all times, and in every situation.

As a citizen, he was in the highest degree useful; and in this view of his character, there is not, perhaps, an individual in Boston, whose loss will be more extensively felt. There is not a society in town, established for the promotion of public good or private benevolence, of which he was not a distinguished member, and in most of them an active officer. Whatever tended to improve or ameliorate the condition of his fellow-citizens was the constant object of his care and attention, and he zealously co-operated in every plan devised for that purpose. Such was his acknowledged integrity, and so great the opinion of his judgment, that he was often chosen umpire, or arbitrator, to decide the disputes of individuals, and if his decisions were sometimes unsatisfactory, they were always just and impartial. To the widow and orphan, he was the comforter, adviser, and friend. Whatever property they inherited he laid out to the utmost advantage; and if it proved insufficient for their support, he was zealous in promoting subscriptions for their relief. As an executor, or administrator, he was able, punctual, and upright. He always closed the accounts of the estate within the shortest possible time, and to the general satisfaction of all parties; and in every transaction of this nature, displayed the most disinterested integrity. In a word, usefulness appeared the object of his life, and like that divine master, whose doctrine he enforced, and whose example he followed, he went about doing good. He "was eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, a father to the fatherless, and he made the widow's heart to sing for joy." You who have known his goodness and experienced his bounty, to you I appeal, if this picture be overcharged. Your sighs and tears assure me that it is not. But sorrow not, my friends, as those who have no hope, but confide in your Heavenly Father, and he will give you another comforter, who will abide with you forever.

As a Clergyman of the Episcopal Church, Bishop Parker was equalled by few: he read with propriety and impressive solemnity, our excellent liturgy, and performed all the ordinances of religion,

in a manner best calculated to impress the heart with their importance. In the pulpit his voice was clear and sonorous, and his delivery energetic; nor, when occasion required, was he ignorant of that touching pathos which moves the springs of sensibility. His discourses were serious and solid, explaining some important doctrine, or enforcing some moral virtue. He was deeply impressed with the necessity of inculcating the essential doctrines of Christianity, which peculiarly distinguish it from other religions, and from a mere system of ethics. The divinity of the Saviour, faith in the Holy Trinity, were, he conceived, essential parts of the Christian system. But, though zealously attached to these important doctrines, he never for a moment lost sight of reason and good sense; and would as vigorously oppose the doctrines of blind faith and absolute predestination, as the defenders of loose and latitudinarian sentiments in religion. But when not engaged in the duties of his profession, he carefully avoided religious controversy, fully sensible that disputes on theoretical points rather engender strife than promote the cause of Christianity, and that combatants, in contests of this nature, frequently depart alienated, but not convinced. He lived on the most friendly terms with the respectable clergy of all denominations, whatever might be their secret sentiments, or acknowledged opinions. Though strongly attached to his own Church, he had no portion of superstition or bigotry in his composition. He attended the public performances of his congregational brethren on all important occasions, and seldom failed to contribute his offering at their charitable lectures. Of his clerical brethren of all persuasions, he always spoke with candour and affection, throwing a veil over their failings, and dwelling with pleasure on their virtues.

To his professional duties he was scrupulously attentive, never failed to preach in his turn, even when prudence might have prompted him to forbear, and observed all the fasts and festivals of the Church with conscientious exactness.

His attention to the poor and to the sick was always unremitting. He administered every spiritual and temporal consolation, which their situation demanded, and cheerfully sacrificed all engagements to the calls of duty. [To be concluded in our next.]

EXTRACT FROM A SERMON

ON JOHN XIV. 21.

He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him.

HAVING shewn how we are to expect this special manifestation of God and his Son, I proceed to consider in what it consists; or, in other words, to answer the Disciple's question—*Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world.*

And here a great many things might be mentioned in which the knowledge of those who love and serve God, is clearer than their's who do not. They see God and his goodness in the works of creation and providence; they behold his hand in all events; they con-

template his providence carrying on all the affairs of the world, making all things work together for good to them who love him. From this they draw perpetual comfort, joy, and consolation, for they *know the truth, and the truth maketh them free*. But, on the other hand, they who give not themselves to serve God, see not his hand in any thing. To them, the affairs of the world are subject only to blind chance, or at most under the controul of men who know not how, and are less disposed to do them any good. All is therefore, gloomy and dark before them; doubt and despondency is their portion, especially when labouring under calamities. If they ever think of God, it is but transiently, and as though he were at a great distance, not surrounding their beds in their slumbers, not about their paths, and spying out all their ways. This makes a wide difference between the real disciples of Christ, and the mere men of the world.

Again, in God's word he is more manifest to them who love him than to others. It is *a light to their feet and a lanthorn unto their paths*; they read it as though God were speaking to them in an audible voice, as though God held converse with them in human language, and that on subjects the most interesting and important. In a great many respects they understapd the meaning of his word where others do not. Having a real desire to come to the knowledge of the truth, by seeking, they find; loving light rather than darkness, because their deeds are right in the sight of God, they obtain light and knowledge in his will, through the oracles of his word; while to the rest of the world it shines but feebly, and they see it at a great distance, glimmering through clouds and darkness, by no means enough to direct their way, or to keep them from stumbling at every temptation. It is no arrogant claim of the pious Christian to say he understands God's word better than others, for he has less temptation to pervert and misunderstand its meaning: He is prejudiced in favour of the truth, and God's word is truth and light.

But in another respect, and more especially, Jesus Christ is manifest to him who loves and serves God faithfully more than to others, inasmuch as he sees him fully in the character of a Saviour, *the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world*; him by whom we have remission of sins and a right to God's favour; he who really loves God for his infinite perfections must have so humble an opinion of himself, his own misdeeds and unworthiness, as to feel the need of a Saviour to atone for his guilt, and he finds Jesus Christ just such an one as he needs, *mighty to save all who come unto him*. He finds that help has been laid on one who is both able and willing to save. He therefore flies directly to him, recognizes him as his Saviour, beholds and contemplates his character, life, sufferings, death, resurrection and ascension into heaven, where he ever liveth to make intercession for us with his Father. These things dwell much on the mind of him who loves and serves God. Thus are the words of our Lord true in a more especial manner, that he will manifest himself unto us. But those who have no relish for, nor delight in the service of God, not seeing his infinite purity

and holiness, and being too proud to own their great need of a Saviour, they look not after him who is offered. And although they have heard of him, yet they have heard of him as of a person who lived long ago, and to whom they are under no obligations of gratitude or love. Here then is a wide difference indeed. Our Lord may be herein manifest to his true disciples and not unto the world. To the one sort he shines in full splendour, as the *Sun of Righteousness with healing in his wings*; while to the other he is eclipsed in total darkness. To the one sort he is all beauty, to the other he has no form nor comeliness, that they should desire him. To the one, he is mighty in power and goodness, doing wonders; but to the other, he is the poor despised Gallilean, who is not going to establish the kingdoms of this world, who promises them neither riches nor glory, and therefore they will not follow him.

But lastly, and above all, Jesus Christ is manifest in a peculiar way to all who love and serve God, by his Holy Spirit the Comforter, from whom cometh all truth. This is the chief and most glorious manifestation of the Saviour to such as saw him not working his miracles in person. This is a standing and constant miracle, always performing in the hearts of true believers. By the suggestions of this Holy Spirit, the truly pious soul sees as it were the heavens open, and Jesus Christ transfigured into the Lord of glory; no more to appear in humility, as when the beloved disciples saw him transfigured on the mount; no more in company only of Moses and Elias; but also with angels and archangels, and all the blessed company of heaven. By this Holy Spirit the real Christian is enabled to resist temptations, and stand fast by God; to run with patience the Christian race; to fight, the good fight, and come off conqueror. It is by this Holy Spirit, that we see and know the truth as it is in Jesus, that we are purified in heart and soul, and made fit for the presence of God. It is this, through the instrumentality of the gospel ordinances, which restores the lost image of God in which man was at first created; so that he may hold converse with his Maker, as once in paradise. And it is this which enables us to look forward to a future world of glory, which lifts up the veil of darkness cast over all flesh, opens the door into heaven, and invites us to enter, saying *this is the way, walk ye in it*. But does God vouchsafe these aids to those who seek not him. Certainly not. They are left to grope their way in darkness. Since they quench and grieve the Holy Spirit, it must be expected it will depart from them. Here then we see another mighty difference between the true Christian and the sinner; the true servant of God, and the servant of the world. God is thus manifest to the one sort, and not unto the other. Jesus Christ appears to the one sort in glory, but by the other is altogether unseen.

Let us then love God sincerely; let us honour him in our hearts, and with our lips, and not doubt but when we seek him aright, he will be found of us; that we shall not seek in vain, but he will love us and come unto us, by his Holy Spirit, doing us good, filling our hearts with joy and gladness, aiding and assisting us to purify ourselves from sin, and finally bringing us to appear in his presence above.

THE following Letter, somewhat defaced, and without signature, was lately found among the papers of an aged person, deceased. From the time and place of its date, and from the evidence of tradition, there is full reason to believe it was written by the Rev. Dr. JOHNSON, first President of King's College, New-York. Not to say any thing of its contents, the circumstances under which it appears to have been written are a proof of the veneration which was entertained for the Doctor among Christians of different denominations, and of the readiness with which he set himself to instruct those who applied to him for that purpose, which it is known was a remarkable trait in his character.

EDITOR.

A LETTER to Mr. SAMUEL BROWNE, of Waterbury, in answer to his Letter of December 28, 1737, in defence of absolute predestination.

STRATFORD, JANUARY 1, 1737-8.

DEAR SIR,

I AM very well pleased with the nervous reasoning of your modest and ingenious letter of December 28, and wish I had leisure to return so large and particular an answer as it deserves: I will, however, offer a few short strictures upon what you therein advance in favour of the doctrine of *absolute and personal decrees concerning the future eternal condition of men, after this life*. In order to which, I would first observe to you, that what prejudices me against that doctrine is, that it manifestly appears to me to be contrary to the divine attributes, to many plain texts of scripture, and to the general drift and design of the whole word of God.

This doctrine appears contrary to the nature and attributes of God, in that it seems plainly inconsistent with the very notion of his being a moral Governor of the world, since it necessarily implies in it a design in him to lay his creatures under a necessity of being sinful, and miserable to all eternity, antecedent to any consideration of their demerit, and this out of a most selfish view of seeking his own glory at the expense of their eternal misery; and besides this, it implies a manifest double dealing with them, in declaring, and that even with an oath, his earnest desire of their happiness, while he secretly designs their infallible ruin. It also appears contrary to a great many plain texts of holy scripture, which so often assure us that *God is not willing that any should perish, but would have all to come to repentance, and be saved*; and that for this end, *Christ tasted death for every man, and became a propitiation for the sins of the whole world,* &c.* And lastly, it seems manifestly repugnant to the general drift of the whole scriptures, (which is plainly to engage mankind to all holiness in heart and life,) there being nothing that can so [effectually tend to cut the sinews of all our endeavours to repent and obey, as even the most distant surmise, that possibly all our exertions may prove fruitless;†] since, for aught we know, we may

* *And gave himself a ransom for all, nay even for those that by denying the Lord that bought them, bring on themselves swift destruction...*

2 Pet. ii. 1, and iii. 9; 1 Tim. ii. 4, 6; Heb. ii. 9; 1 John ii. 2.

† The passages in brackets are supplied, not being legible in the MS.

be excluded from all possibility of succeeding by an absolute and inexorable decree of reprobation: whereas on the contrary, nothing can more effectually tend to engage us to be *holy as God is holy, righteous as he is righteous, and merciful as he our Heavenly Father is merciful*, than those amiable apprehensions which represent him as being in and through Christ, an universal and irrespective lover of the souls that he has made, and sincerely and solicitously desirous of their happiness, in proportion to their several capacities, and ready, *without respect of persons*, for his sake to lend them all the aid and assistance necessary thereto, so far as can consist with treating them as being what they are, and what he has made them; *i. e.* free, self-exerting, and self-determining agents, and to make all the tender and merciful allowances for their frailty that can consist with the sincerity of their obedience, and his righteousness and authority in the government of the world; and this I take to be the idea or conception of him, which, agreeably to the light of nature, the holy scriptures universally give us concerning him. On which accounts if there be any difficulties from either reason or scripture, (as to me there appear none, but what by attentive consideration may be easily surmounted) yet, methinks, we should be strongly inclined, for God's sake, as well as our own, if possible, to get over them; and whatever obscure texts there are, that may seem to carry a different sound with them, to interpret them (as in fact the Church of God always did, in her best and purest ages) into a consistency with the divine attributes, and those many plain texts that are entirely consonant to them, and the general drift of the whole word of God; being well assured that whatever be the meaning of those few obscure texts, they cannot possibly mean any thing contrary either to the light of nature, or any other texts of scripture; or any thing that can tend to make us negligent, or to quiet us in our sins, or to discourage or dishearten us in our utmost endeavours to reform our lives, and bring forth the fruits of holiness and new obedience.

You have mentioned but two texts to support the doctrine of *absolute personal decrees* relating to the eternal state of men, and they are, *Rom. ix. 6. &c.* and *Eph. i. 4.* and what I shall say on these texts may be applied to most, if not all others that relate to this subject. And, first, as to *Rom. 9.* in order to the solution of what difficulties may seem to arise from this text, we must distinguish between talents bestowed on men in this life, which is a state of probation, and the retribution to be awarded in the life to come, according to what use men make of them here. In the one, God acts as a sovereign Lord of his favours; and in the other, as a righteous Judge of the behaviour of his creatures under them. Justice seems evidently to require, that in giving being to a creature, it be placed in a condition that is (in the whole of its circumstances and duration) *better than not to be*, or that renders being desirable to it, every thing considered; nor can it, I think, consist with justice to put a creature into a state that is, in the whole, worse than not to be at all, unless it be for its own personal demerit. But all that is bestowed upon it, beyond a condition that does, in the whole, render

being desirable, is matter of favour and grace. Now, in the distribution of talents, which are favours, it will be readily allowed, that God may deal as he pleases. He may bestow his favours to whom, and in what measure and manner he thinks fit, and none can reasonably complain. In this, he is sovereign and arbitrary; allotting to one the nature and condition of a man; to another that of an angel; to one man, or number of men, *one talent*, viz. *the light of nature*; to another, *two talents*, viz. *Judaism*; and to another, *five*, viz. *Christianity*; to one man a healthy, to another a sickly constitution; to one poverty, to another riches; to one small abilities and mean advantages; to another large powers and great opportunities for learning, &c. [In these and the like distributions of his favours in this state of probation, I allow God's decrees to be absolute and personal, as well as national;] but this is but a temporary and probationary state: whereas, in the state of retribution, after this life, the condition of men will be decided for all eternity, not according to what they have received here, but according to what improvements they have made: there an absolute decision has nothing to do: God's decrees and dispensations, therefore, with regard to that state, can imply nothing else but his resolution to treat all men according to the use they shall have made of his several allotments to them in this world, in exact proportion to what they had received.

Now I cannot find, by attending to the language of St. Paul, or the occasion and scope of his reasoning, in the epistle to the Romans, that the 9th chapter has any direct relation to the condition of men after this life, or what retribution God will make to them then, in proportion to their behaviour here in the use of the talents he has committed to their trust; but it is manifestly to be understood of the various distributions of his talents and favours to them during this their state of probation, in choosing or rejecting whom he pleases, with regard to the privileges of being his peculiar people, in which he is merely sovereign and arbitrary. He was so in choosing the seed of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, at first to enjoy the great talent of revealed religion, and the promise of the Messiah, and in rejecting that of *Ishmael* and *Esau* from that favour, though they were not destitute of a good degree of favour, in enjoying the lesser talent of the light of nature, and so he was now in rejecting the Jews for a time, and calling the Gentiles to the yet greater and inestimable talent of the gospel: I say, of these St. Paul is to be understood; for it is manifest that those passages of *Jacob* and *Esau*, and of *Isaac* and *Ishmael* are not to be understood of the persons themselves, (much less of their eternal state) but of the nations to descend from them, as will appear, if you look into the texts in *Genesis*, from whence they are quoted. Thus of *Jacob* and *Esau* it was said to *Rebecca*, *Gen. xxv. 23. Two nations are in thy womb, two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; the one people shall be stronger than the other people, and the elder shall serve the younger*: And that text, *Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated*, quoted from *Mal. i. 2. 3.* is manifestly to be understood, not of the persons, but of the nations. Where, by the way, neither is God's

hatred of *Esau* to be understood to imply absolute hatred, for he had a good blessing, but only of a less degree of love, according to a known figure of speech in the Hebrew language, in which, that is frequently spoken absolutely, which is meant comparatively. In the same sense, Christ says, *He that hateth not father and mother, &c. cannot be my disciple....* Luke xiv. 26. where surely he cannot be understood to mean absolute hatred, but only a less degree of love: and so he explains himself in another place, by saying, *He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me....* Mat. x. 37. So that God's hating *Esau* only means that he loved *Jacob*, i. e. the people of *Israel*, more than *Esau*, i. e. the people of *Edom*, and bestowed greater talents on one than on the other.

It is therefore only with respect to the bestowment of certain special privileges and talents in this life, that *St. Paul* is here to be understood when he says v. xvi, *It is not of him that willeth, (for Abraham wished, O that Ishmael might live!) nor of him that runneth, (for Esau ran to fetch the venison, that he might get the blessing,) but of God that sheweth mercy; who therefore, in the bestowment of favours [hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and hath compassion on whom he will have compassion:]* for here justice hath nothing to do; so that in distributing his favours, there can be no unrighteousness in him: He may do what he will with his own: and with respect to these it may justly be said, *who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? hath not the potter power over the clay to make of the same lump, one vessel to honour and another to dishonour?* Where yet it must be observed that vessels made for dishonourable or less honourable services, have yet some degree, some interest in their owner's love and favour. But all this has nothing to do with the distributions of the life to come: There justice alone takes place, which consists only in exactly proportioning rewards and punishments to men, according to their good or ill conduct in the use of the several favours and talents committed to them in this life.

But you will perhaps say, is not the example of *Pharaoh*, v. 17. to be understood with regard to the retributions of the life to come? I answer, No. For *St. Paul* was as well concerned to vindicate the justice of God in rejecting the Jews for their perverseness, as the sovereignty of God in freely bestowing his gospel favours upon the Gentiles. To this purpose therefore, it is, that he alledgeth the instance of *Pharaoh*, that he might justify God's dealings in rejecting the Jews, and justly hardening their hearts, i. e. leaving them to the hardness of their hearts in rejecting Christ; as he had justly hardened *Pharaoh's* heart, i. e. left him to the hardness of his heart in resisting the force of the miracles he had wrought for his conviction; and to shew, that God might justly make the Jews monuments of his wrath in cutting them off from being a people, for their obstinate rejecting of Christ, as he had made *Pharaoh* a monument of his wrath, in the eyes of the world, for his obstinacy in hardening his heart against all the means used for his conviction. And that expression, *For this cause have I raised thee up, &c.* does not mean, *For this cause have I given thee being*, but *For this cause have I made thee to stand,*

as the *Hebrew* word imports, i. e. for this cause have I supported thee and prolonged thy life through one plague after another, that I might, for thy obstinacy and perverseness, make thee an illustrious example of my vengeance to all the earth. And *whom he will, he hardeneth*, means only, *whom he will* of those who deserve to be abandoned for their obstinacy, proceeding according to his wise and righteous good pleasure, in the government of the world, he justly leaves to the hardness of their hearts, for the terror of others, as he did *Pharaoh*, and was now in like manner determined to leave the *Jews* for their obstinate wickedness in rejecting and crucifying Christ. But what has all this to do with any absolute decrees of God, and especially with regard to the personal and eternal state of men? And thus much for the 9th of Romans.

As to your other text, *Eph. i. 4.* you know the *Ephesians* were mostly Gentiles, though there might be some Jews among them, and the design of that expression of *choosing them in Christ before the foundation of the world*, was probably, as Dr. Whitby supposes, to obviate a notion that had obtained among the Jews, which we find in their writers, as though God had chosen them only in the *Messiah* that was to come, and that before the foundation of the world, which they conceived was made for their sakes: whereas, the Apostle, in allusion to their way of speaking, would have them know that they ought not to arrogate the notion of any such privilege to themselves alone; but that God had chosen or designed the Gentiles, as well as them, to have the benefit of the *Messiah*, and that before the foundation of the world, that they might be holy or sanctified to God in him, and be engaged by faith in him, to lead holy and virtuous lives here, and so be happy forever hereafter. And accordingly it may be truly said of all that are called to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, that they are chosen in Christ as being at least externally members of his body the Church, to have the great talent of the gospel committed to them, [and that for this end, that by the dispensation of the gospel,] they might learn to be *holy in all manner of conversation*, and be thereby partakers of the benefits of that adoption, they were predestinated unto: For all that are baptized are as to their external standing in the *family and household of God*, and so are the reputed children of God, having a conditional title to the eternal inheritance, and are really such, and will finally be treated as such, by being put into the possession of that heavenly inheritance provided for them, if they yield a filial obedience to God conformable to the gospel, and persevere faithful to their high and holy calling to the end of their days. Now I cannot see that this text need, or can reasonably be supposed, (consistent with other texts,) to imply any such absolute personal decree concerning the eternal condition of men as you plead for: So far from this, that it is the condition only of future happiness that is here spoken of.

Upon the whole, it seems to me, that the right way of forming a just notion of God's decrees, is to judge of them by the facts as they really are before our eyes. There are in fact a great variety of privileges and talents actually bestowed: Therefore God, as the sovereign lord of his favours, decreed there should be such a variety.

And good men that make a good use of them, will be happy ; and the wicked and impenitent will be miserable, as God has in fact assured us, according to the sentence which he will pass upon them as the righteous judge of their conduct and behaviour : and therefore he decreed that this should be the result of things ; that the righteous should be happy, and the wicked miserable : And this is all the notion I can have of the decrees of God. And as God has plainly discovered his decrees to be such as the facts in conjunction with revealed religion declare them to be, so I conceive, that his great end in giving being to his creatures and in all his various dispensations towards them, must have been not any advantage to himself, but that they might be happy in proportion to their several talents and improvements, in consequence of their cheerful submission to his sovereign allotments, and sincere obedience to his holy laws : only with this reserve, that in * * * * * *The remainder is wanting.*

THOUGHTS ON THE BIBLE.

BOOKS are addressed to the judgment or imagination, intended to touch the passions, or please the fancy. The Holy Bible addresses the soul, directs to the paths of peace and happiness here, and brings to view a beautiful prospect of an hereafter ; in its pages may be viewed with awful surprize, the great and glorious creation—and with pleasing admiration may be seen the rise and fall of empires ; the revolutions of kingdoms and states ; the various vicissitudes of life in all stations ; the depravity of human nature, when man is forsaken by his God ; the easy transition from innocence to guilt, from virtue to vice ; the policy of courts and simplicity of cottages ; the rage of lust, folly of pride, fate of tyranny, and madness of ambition.

Here may be found patterns for all who wish to practice the Christian and moral duties. St. Gregory says, “from the patriarchs we may take the model of all virtues ; Abel teaches us innocence ; Enoch, purity of heart ; Noah, a firm perseverance in righteousness ; Abraham, the perfection of piety and faithfulness ; Joseph, chastity ; Jacob, constancy in labour ; Moses, meekness, and Job, invincible patience. Salvation the most glorious prize that man can obtain, may be pursued with pleasure, and it may with care be acquired, if piety is the guide, and faith the intercessor ; the mercy of God is greater than our delinquency, and happiness eternal within our reach, if we suppress the gratification of our passions to seek it.—Read, therefore, and be informed ; look for, and find.”

ST. CYPRIAN TO DONATUS, ON THE GRACE OF GOD.

[Concluded.]

THERE is but one way of founding our ease and security upon a solid and lasting bottom ; and that is, to get off with the soonest, from the waves of this troublesome world, to retire thence, and to fix in the only sure haven of rest and peace ; to raise our thoughts and apprehensions from earth to heaven ; to interest our-

selves in the covenant of grace ; to ascend up to God in heart and affection, and to furnish our consciences with those materials of happiness and satisfaction, which the men of this world seek after in a world unable to furnish them. A man who thus hath raised himself above the world, will eagerly expect, will importunately seek for nothing from it. O, what a blessed state is this of repose and safety ! How firm is the security which is derived from heaven ! What a felicity is it to be disengaged from the entanglements of this perplexing scene, to be purified from the dross of this sinful world, and to be fitted for immortality, notwithstanding all the former attempts of our grand adversary to seduce and to corrupt us ! The reflections we make upon what we have been, will oblige us to so much the greater degrees of love to God, for what we are like to be. Nor is there need of cost, or courting, or of any laborious endeavour, to attain the highest dignity and happiness of human nature. It is the free gift of God, and may easily be had. His heavenly grace flows into the soul, as the sun of its own accord enlightens the dark corners of the earth ; as an everflowing fountain offers its waters to any who will use them, or as the refreshing dews descend unasked upon the thirsty meadows. When once the soul of man is brought to acknowledge and consider its heavenly extract, and hath learnt to raise itself above the world, it begins from that moment to enter upon the state for which it believes itself created. You, for your part, my *Donatus*, are already listed a soldier of Christ. Your care therefore, must only be to keep within the rules of that profession which you are engaged in, and to practise the virtues which it requires from you. Be diligent in prayer, and in reading the word of God. At some times you must speak with God ; at other times he must speak with you. Let him instruct you with his precepts, and form your mind by the guidance of his counsel. The man who is thence enriched, no one can impoverish ; he who is filled with the fulness of God, cannot be empty. All the gaudiness and pomp of life will become insipid and jejune to you, when once you are convinced, that your care should rather be employed upon yourself, and your soul be adorned with the graces of the gospel ; that the house which God hath vouchsafed to make his temple, and in which his Holy Spirit is pleased to set up his abode, should be fitted up to receive him, with a concern proportioned to the dignity of the guest expected. Let innocence and righteousness adorn this habitation for him. These are ornaments which no length of time will decay, nor accidents of weather tarnish. The embellishments of human art will be soiled and withered with age : Nor can any man depend upon the continuance of things which are in their own nature so obnoxious to change ; but the beauty, the ornaments, the splendour of the house, whereof I have been speaking, are permanent, and will abide by you ; time and accident can make no disadvantageous impression on it ; only the time will come when it shall be renewed with great advantage, and be clothed with a more durable and better covering.

I have thus, as briefly as I could, my dear *Donatus*, opened my mind at present to you upon this important subject. For though I am

sensible that your good dispositions, the serious ply of your thoughts, and the firmness of your faith, make you a patient and willing hearer of the things which pertain unto life and godliness, and that no subject is so pleasing to you as that which is most pleasing to God also; yet I have judged it fit to contract what I had to say, in regard that we are near neighbours, and therefore shall have frequent opportunities of conversing together upon these matters. Since this is then a time of leisure and recreation, let us spend the remainder of the day in gladness and singleness of heart; nor let the hour of our repast go over us without some portion of that grace which hath hitherto employed our minds and tongues. The mirth of a sober meal should be expressed in psalmody; and as you are blessed with a happy memory and a tunable voice, do you undertake this office, and enter upon it, according to received custom.* Your friends will have the better entertainment by their intermixing it with spiritual discourse, and with religious harmony.

* * * * *

ADVICE TO A STUDENT,

CONCERNING THE QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES OF A CLERGYMAN.

THE PRECEPTS OF RELIGION.

I HAVE reserved positive institutions for a distinct consideration. They agree with other duties of religion in this, that the action imposed, bears a conformity to the will of God; for it is enjoined by him: they differ in this, that, independently on the injunction, it has no inherent, discernible, rectitude or beneficial tendency. Whence flow these consequences, 1. Positive institutions oblige by virtue of revealed precept only, and those persons alone on whom they are so imposed. 2. The action imposed, antecedently to the injunction, is a thing indifferent, and not a moral virtue. 3. The performance of the action imposed, subsequently to the injunction, is a moral virtue; because it is an act of obedience to the will of God; and therefore has in it that unalterable rectitude and beneficial consequence which I before observed to be the formal ratio, or essence of moral virtue. Therefore, 4. the performance of this action is a duty of standing and indispensable obligation, so long, and so far, and under such circumstances, as it is understood to be imposed. 5. Whenever it happens to be incompatible with the performance of an action, which, independently of any positive injunction, is a moral virtue, we may collect from the reason of the thing and the declarations of scripture, that it is not imposed. 6. Positive institutions are partly means and partly ends. They are means, as they minister to moral holiness, by accustoming the agent to implicit obedience, by the natural impression of a religious solemnity on the mind, and by the blessing of God upon his ordinances. They are ends, as the performance of them is itself a part of moral holiness, being (as above stated) an act of obedience to the will of God.

* It appears to have been customary, among the Primitive Christians, to sing psalms and sacred hymns at meal times, in token of gratitude for the bounties of Providence.

EDITOR.

But, 7. so far as they are means only, they are of divine appointment, and not of human choice; they are therefore not methods of prudence only, but of duty.

I have been something the more minute in this discussion, because I wish you to comprehend clearly the grounds and measures of moral and religious obligation; in order that you may be well prepared in all your discourses, to mark the limits of every duty by its immediate and ultimate rule, and to give due weight to every motive of obedience, principal and subordinate. And I believe all your future reading and meditation on this subject will terminate in the conclusion to which I have been endeavouring to lead you: which I cannot express better than in the words of Bishop Sanderson;—"The will of God however revealed to men, (i. e. whether by natural reason inferring from the rectitude and beneficial tendency of an action the will of God concerning it, or by supernatural communication) is the proper and adequate rule of conscience." This is the law prescribed by the unchangeable nature of things to every rational creature. To this he must look up for his rule of action, for his obligation, and for his recompense. How far he might derive an impulsive sense of obligation, and prospect of recompense, from his apprehension of the essential difference of things, that is, of the rectitude and beneficial tendency of them or the contrary, if he were not under the direction and disposal of a superior will, is a question rather curious than useful; because it supposes a case absurd and impossible, a contingent or created being independent of a necessary being or creator; or at least a case which probably never existed; such a being having ideas of rectitude and beneficial tendency, and at the same time no notion whatever of any superior regulating and controuling power. With respect, however, to the only rational nature to which we can apply the enquiry, there is certainly inherent in it an indelible apprehension and approbation of rectitude, however in some tribes and individuals of the species, in various, and even extreme degrees obscured, perplexed, and perverted. We feel in every virtuous action a sense of its intrinsic propriety and loveliness; blended, first, with the satisfaction of expressing our reverence and obedience to our sovereign benefactor and governor; and secondly, with a hope of his acceptance and favour.—These just sentiments, it is true, are awakened in us, and strengthened, by early culture and habit, by traditionary notions, by revelation and by grace: but still the faculty which suggests, or embraces them is the original gift of the creator; it is our *reason*; an essential part of our spiritual being, as vision or taste is of our animal or corporeal; which three faculties must be all equally corrupted, or mutilated before they can cease to distinguish each in its respective office, moral "good from evil, light from darkness, and sweet from bitter."* The infant mind has been compared to a tabula rasa, or sheet of clean paper: but there is this essential difference, as hath been well observed, between the opposite objects of the comparison; they are not both equally indifferent to the inscription which they are to bear: "upon the tabula or paper you may write what you

* Isaiah v. 20.

“ please ; that wormwood is sweet, and sugar is bitter ; that gratitude and compassion are base, treachery and envy noble ; but no art or industry are capable of making those impressions on the mind : she hath predetermined tastes and sentiments, which arise from a source that is beyond experience, custom, or choice.”*— This source can be no other than the constitution which the creator hath given her : and these essential tastes and sentiments serve her as an immediate rule of action, and as one instrument of discerning their archetype in his all-perfect will.

Now as moral virtue or religious duty (for having shewn them to be inseparable, I may use the terms indiscriminately) comes recommended to our choice by the union of these three qualities, fitness or rectitude, beneficial consequence or tendency, and conformity to the divine will, it follows, that he who desires to excite the love of it in himself or others, will give a proportionate attention to them all : and having in his hands a revelation of the divine will, he will state this conformity, not only as inferrable from the rectitude and beneficial tendency, but also as declared expressly by this revelation. To resume the examples above-mentioned, he will speak of parental affection, not only as a dictate of nature ; as necessary to the continuation and well being of mankind ; as the principle of many other social virtues, and hence proved to be conformable to the will of God ; but also as prescribed by his revealed law. He will discourse of temperance, not only as a precept of the Gospel, and otherwise proved to be conformable to the will of God ; but as a habit necessary to health, and conducive to long life ; observing that its opposite is degrading to our nature, an abuse of the divine bounty which gives us the productions of the earth for our good, and a breach of justice or charity in absorbing a disproportioned share of them. If, in treating on either of these virtues, he omit the consideration of the divine will, he tacitly takes away the solid basis of obligation, and shuts out the prospect of future retribution : he becomes a mere jejune moralist ; and so far beneath the heathen poets or some of the better sort of philosophers, as they, though they had no authentic revelation to define or to sanction their precept, yet have frequent reference, expressed or implied, to the authority of the Deity, and the awards of a future state. If on the other hand, he slight the moral argument, he loses a substantial ground of proof and persuasion concerning the particular virtues : and moreover he passes by so much illustration of the truth of the revelation in general, and so much fresh motive of reverence to the revealer, as must ever arise from the conviction that “ the commandment is ” intrinsically “ holy, just, and good,”† suitable to our conception of the essential “ holiness ” of the lawgiver, because “ right,” and “ beneficial to his creatures.”

To each therefore, of these unquestionable arguments in favour of a virtuous and religious conduct, you will allow its due place and weight : and, in this distribution, you will find it invariably right,

* Usher's Introduction to the Theory of the Human Mind, Sec. 3.

† Rom. vii, 13.

to rest the primary obligation and limitation of every duty on the revealed will of God: "to the law and to the testimony."* For,

1. This is a rule, and an authority intelligible and conclusive, upon every subject, and to every hearer. The fitness or rectitude of an action or habit, however certain, is not in every case so striking as in the first example which I have adduced: the beneficial consequence or tendency of it is not always so manifest as in the second: and the conclusion to be drawn from these two qualities, the conformity of the action or habit to the will of God, must be weaker in proportion to the diminished force or evidence of the premises.— Besides, the judgment of every hearer upon the rectitude or beneficial tendency of any conduct, (however demonstrable they be to an inquirer every way competent,) depends much upon his natural perspicacity, education, habits, and prejudices; these, in every congregation, are various; rarely adapted to abstract reasoning; nor always favourable to naked truth; which scarcely can preserve her independence and influence, if she come forth, in opposition to the misapprehensions and passions of men, not protected by the divine authority, not guarded by "the shield of faith, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God."† The virtue which the hearer least affects will lose much of its native comeliness in his partial and imperfect view: and the necessity of it to the general happiness will with him, become problematical, if his passions have so far blinded him, as to make it appear incompatible with his own. The practical dictate resulting from these precarious judgments is not likely to be very correct or uniform: and there is danger that his spiritual freedom and welfare, thus left to depend entirely upon his apprehensions of the beauty or utility of a virtue, may rest upon "the staff of a broken reed, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand and pierce it."‡

2. The sanctions of virtue propounded by the word of God are incomparably more weighty and authentic, than any which unassisted reason can offer. The rectitude of an action, indeed, ensures the approbation of conscience: the beneficial tendency of it implies a probable reward in its natural effects: the conformity of it, thence inferable to the will of God, affords the expectation of his blessing here, and, upon the difficult supposition of a uniform obedience, (or, of such imperfect obedience as he shall graciously accept) a high probability of his larger bounty in some future state: and the opposite qualities of an action involve consequences respectively contrary. But what proportion do these sanctions bear, either in kind, or in extent, or in certainty, to the covenanted, or mediatorial promises, and the express threatenings of the Gospel?

3. Lastly, as divine revelation holds forth to those who are so happy as to enjoy it, the clearest discovery, and the most persuasive recommendation, of moral virtue, it seems to be at once an act of reason, and an offering of duty to the gracious author of it, to look up to it as our constant and sovereign guide: "thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."|| A contrary habit of

* Isaiah viii. 20.

† Eph. vi. 17.

‡ 2. Kings xviii. 21.

§ Heb. viii. 6. || Ps. cix. 105.

dwelling entirely or principally on the beauty and loveliness of this or that virtue, its present utility, or even the rational probability of its future recompense ; this moral preaching, though it be so far correct as it delivers some unquestionable truths, yet is greatly erroneous in that it keeps back others, without which, alas ! the former ones would avail us little towards clearing our prospects in another world ; still less (such is the corruption of our nature, and so hath been the fact in all ages) for the effectual guidance of our manners in the present. It diverts the attention of the hearer from the great truths of the gospel, its doctrines, its precepts, and its sanctions ; all which together form the adequate object of his faith, the law of his conduct, and the measure of his expectations. To limit your instructions and exhortations to any inferior speculations, rules, or motives, is to guide your followers with a candle after the sun has risen : it has a natural tendency to contract their views to the few small objects within the narrow circle of this imperfect vision ; to make them shrink from the enlarged and more splendid prospects, which the celestial light would present to them ; at length, to lead them to forget that he shines around them, or even forcibly to shut him out from their sight. To speak plainly, I cannot but look upon such mere moral discourses as the effect of considerable and dangerous inadvertency ; inasmuch as, by narrowing the foundations, and weakening the sanctions, of Christian morality, they hazard the virtue of the hearer ; and, by continually withdrawing from his view the Christian doctrine, they imperceptibly prepare him to renounce his faith.

The result of the whole is this. As the will of God is the adequate rule of conscience ; as his will is made known to us, partly by supernatural revelation and partly by natural reason ; as the precepts of revelation are to be interpreted and applied by reason, and also to be recommended by it for their intrinsic excellence ; it seems meet that you should inform and guide your hearers by a careful reference to each of these heavenly monitors in due order and combination : being assured that, whenever they are properly attended to, they will agree in laying down and enforcing one measure of moral and religious duty.



POETRY.

ODE TO MEDITATION.

I.

YE active scenes of busy life,
Where all is tumult, noise, and strife,
Where empty Pleasure's haggard
train
And loud Contention rudely reign !
Where fierce Ambition, mad Desire,
And moody Discontent, conspire
To baffle Nature's even plan, [man ;
And strew with thorns the path of

Ye busy scenes ! where Pelf and
Care

Divide each soul, each bosom share ;
I'll leave ye to the hurried throng,
And in sequester'd shades pour forth
my artless song.

II.

The wooded vale, the lonely dell,
The ivy'd arch, the moss-grown cell,

The smoothly-flowing glassy stream,
That silently reflects the beam
Of broad-ey'd day; or rapid brook,
That gurgling flows from yonder
nook,
And, sudden wid'ning o'er the plain,
Adds beauty to the rich domain;
These, these are nature's charms, and
these
The heart for contemplation form'd
must please!

III.

Give me to tread the echoing wood,
Or trace the margin of the flood,
Glitt'ring thro' many a thorny brake
'Till it o'erflows the swelling lake.
Give me to climb yon lofty steep,
And from the point which mocks the
deep,
View the contrasted tints that glow
In rich variety below;
While soaring larks, still hov'ring
near
With watchful care, delight the ear,
Mocking the worlding's false pre-
tence
To each refin'd delight of sense:
Alas! his grosser feelings ne'er
In such pure joys as these could share;
His feeble mind, unus'd to thought,
Would deem such pleasures dearly
bought;
Would think the labour ill repaid
By contemplating light and shade;
But know, proud sceptic, dare to
know,
That Nature's gifts yet higher joys
bestow!

IV.

Within her variegated bow'r,
Profusely hung with ev'ry flow'r
That charms the eye or courts the
smell,
Coy Meditation loves to dwell:
'Tis there she sits from early dawn
Till dewy eve bespreads the lawn,
Marking the thrilling black bird's
note,
Or parting sun-beams, as they float
In length'ning lines across the stream,
Till their extinction wakes her from
her dream.

V.

And when slow-pacing silent night
Veils the rich landscape from her
sight,
Unfolding, with a steady hand,
The dark-spun texture 'thwart the
strand;
Nor midnight damps, nor dewy chills
Nor rising mists from babbling rills,
Can quench the ardour of her fire,
Or bid her from the scene retire;
In Nature's walks she still can find
Meet contemplation for her well-
stor'd mind.

VI.

'Tis then that Nature's solemn stole
With rapture fills her high-wrought
soul!
'Tis then that truths divinely sung
Urge repetition from her tongue;
'Tis then, to pure devotion given,
She elevates her thoughts to Heav'n!
Yes! at that still and lonely hour,
When the sweet night-bird loves to
pour
In soothing strains his wond'rous
note,
Tuning to praise his warbling throat,
Wrapt in Religion's hallow'd vest,
She feels new ardours warm her
breast;
And, by Hope's pinions borne on
high,
Treads under foot the starry sky;
Till, mingling with th' angelic train,
She joins the never-ending choral
strain.

VII.

Hail Meditation! happy maid!
With thee I'll seek the tranquil glade;
With thee the lonely cell explore,
Or haunt the gaily smiling shore;
With thee inhale the breath of morn,
And sip the dew-drop from the thorn;
Or when the sickly moon-beams
creep
In silence o'er the craggy steep,
With thee, instructive fair, I'll climb
Those heights stupendous, yet sub-
lime,
Where tow'ring reason 'gins to nod,
And Nature's wonders end in Na-
ture's God!

HYMN ON GRACE.

"HOW blest, thy creature is, O God
 When with a single eye,
 He views the lustre of thy word,
 The day-spring from on high!
 Thro' all the storms that veil the skies,
 And frown on earthly things,
 The Sun of Righteousness he eyes,
 With healing in his wings.
 Struck by that light, the human heart,
 A barren soil no more,
 Sends the sweet smell of grace a-
 broad,
 Where serpents lurk'd before.
 The soul, a dreary province once
 Of Satan's dark domain,
 Feels a new empire form'd within,
 And owns a heav'nly reign.
 The glorious orb, whose golden beams
 The fruitful year controul,
 Since first, obedient to thy word,
 He started from the goal,
 Has cheer'd the nations with the joys
 His orient beams impart:—
 But, Jesus! 'tis thy light alone
 Can shine upon the heart."

COWPER.

HYMN ON FAITH.

"GOD moves in a mysterious way,
 His wonders to perform;
 He plants his footsteps in the sea,
 And rides upon the storm.
 Deep in unfathomable mines
 Of never-failing skill,
 He treasures up his bright designs,
 And works his sovereign will.
 Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
 The clouds ye so much dread
 Are big with mercy, and shall break
 In blessings on your head.
 Judge not the lord by feeble sense,
 But trust him for his grace;
 Behind a frowning providence
 He hides a smiling face.
 His purposes will ripen fast,
 Unfolding ev'ry hour;
 The bud may have a bitter taste,
 But sweet will be the flow'r.
 Blind unbelief is sure to err,
 And scan his work in vain;
 God is his own interpreter,
 And he will make it plain."

COWPER.

ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS.

[NO. VIII.]

LETTER TO REV. MESSRS. LEAMING AND HUBBARD.

LONDON, APRIL 30, 1784.

GENTLEMEN,

YOUR letter dated at Middletown, Feb. 5, with the papers that accompanied it, came duly to me by the packet. I also received a letter from Mr. Leaming, but no copy of the act of the legislature to which in your letter you refer. I hope it is on the way.

I have communicated your letter to the Archbishop of York, and the Bishop of London and Oxford; the last did not seem to think it quite satisfactory, but said the letter was a good one, and gave him an advantageous opinion of the gentlemen who wrote it, and of the Clergy of Connecticut in general; and that it was worthy of serious consideration. The Bishop of London thought it removed all the difficulties on your side of the water, and that nothing now was wanting but an act of Parliament to dispense with the state oaths, and he imagined that would be easily obtained. The Archbishop of York gave no opinion, but wished that I would lose no time in shewing it to the Archbishop of Canterbury. This happened yesterday. This morning I went to Lambeth, but his Grace was gone out about

ten minutes before I got there. I shall go again to-morrow ; but if I stay till I have seen him, I shall lose this opportunity of writing, which I am not willing to do.

Upon the whole, your letter will do good. It attacks the objections in the right place, and answers them fairly ; and will enable me to take up the business upon firmer ground. I have determined with myself, that if the Bishops hang back, to bring the matter before Parliament by petition, and if that shall fail, the scheme will be at an end here, I fear forever. Capt. Coupar will sail from hence in three weeks, and by him I hope to be able to give you some satisfactory accounts of my procedure.

You will, Gentlemen, inform my friends at New-London how matters are situated. I hope to be with them in the course of this summer, and shall not hesitate to trust my future prospects to God's good providence, and the kind endeavours of my brethren to render my life comfortable, nay, happy.

This is a very hasty letter. I have had only twenty minutes to write it in. My best wishes attend the Clergy of Connecticut. Nova Scotia affairs, civil and ecclesiastical, go on heavily. The Parliament is to meet May 18th. Mr. Leaming will forgive my not answering his letter now, because it is impossible. All the American Clergy here are well.

Accept, my good, my dear friends,
the most affectionate regards of your
most obliged humble servant,
SAMUEL SEABURY.

—*—*—*—*—
[NO. IX.]

LETTER TO THE REV. MR. JARVIS.

LONDON, MAY 3, 1784.

MY DEAR SIR,

I EMBRACE an opportunity, by the way of Rhode-Island, to address you as Secretary of the Convention, and to inform you that I have received a letter of the 5th of February, signed by yourself and my very good brethren Leaming and Hubbard, for which you all have my most hearty thanks. I am also to inform you that I wrote to you and them, as a committee, on the 30th of April, under cover to Mr. Ellison, by a vessel bound to New-York (the ship *Buccleugh*) acknowledging the receipt of the letter above mentioned. Mine was a very hasty letter—but in it I acquainted you that I had shewn your letter to the Archbishop of York: We were broken in upon by company and he gave me no opinion on the letter; but desired that I would communicate it to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and to the Bishop of London, as soon as I conveniently could. I called, in my way, on the Bishop of Oxford, who has been very attentive to me, speaks his mind without reserve, and is communicative, and hears me with patience and candour, is much of a gentleman, and a man of learning and business. He read the letter with attention—said he hardly thought it sufficient ground to proceed upon. I endeavoured to explain the arguments you had used, and

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to confirm them from the particular circumstances of the Church in Connecticut. He read the letter again, commended it, spoke handsomely of the gentlemen who wrote it, and of the Clergy of Connecticut, who so anxiously strove to perpetuate the Episcopal Church—said it would be a great pity that so much piety and zeal in so good a cause should not obtain the wished for object—that the letter certainly gave an opportunity for re-considering the matter, and merited attentive deliberation, and that possibly he should yet come into the opinion of its writers. I am sorry that he leaves town next week, as I shall thereby lose the benefit of his advice and assistance.

From him I went to the Bishop of London, who is an amiable man, but very infirm, and I think his memory and other faculties are declining; he avoids business as much as possible. Having read the letter, he asked many questions, and when he fully apprehended the matter, he said that he thought that every objection was removed on the part of the Connecticut Clergy, and that an act of Parliament, which he thought might be easily obtained, would remove the impediment of the state oaths, and that he hoped the Archbishop of Canterbury would see the matter in the same light that he did.

The next morning I went to Lambeth, but missed of seeing his Grace. On the first of May I went again. His Grace's behaviour, though polite, I thought was cool and restrained. When he had read the letter, he observed that it was still the application only of the Clergy, and that the permission was only the permission of individuals, and not of the legislature. I observed that the reasons why the legislature had not been applied to were specified in the letter, and that they appeared to me to be founded in reason and good sense—that had his Grace demanded the concurrence of the laity of the Church last autumn, it might easily have been procured. That it was the first wish both of the Episcopal Clergy and laity of Connecticut to have an Episcopate through the clear and uninterrupted channel of the Church of England, and my first wish that his Grace and the Archbishop of York might be the instruments of its conveyance—but that if such difficulties and objections lay in the way as it was impossible to remove, it was but lost time for me to pursue it further; but that I hoped his Grace would converse with the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of London on the subject. He said he certainly would as soon as he was able, but that he was then very unwell. I thought it was no good time to press the matter while the body and mind were not in perfect unison, and rose to withdraw, offering to leave the letter, as it might be wanted. I will not, said he, take the original from you, lest it should fare as the letter you brought from the Clergy of Connecticut has fared. I left it with Lord North when he was in office, and have never been able to recover it; but if you will favour me with copies of both letters I shall be obliged to you. I promised compliance, and took my leave.

Dr. Chandler has been with him to-day on the subject of the Nova-Scotia Episcopate, which, I believe, will be effected. His Grace introduced the subject of Connecticut; declared his readiness to

do every thing in his power, complimented the Clergy of Connecticut, and your humble servant, talked of an act of Parliament, and mentioned that some young gentlemen from the southern states, who were here soliciting orders, had applied to the Danish Bishops, through the medium of the Danish ambassador at the Hague, upon a supposition that he was averse to conferring orders on them; but that the supposition was groundless, he being willing and ready to do it when it could be consistently done. These young gentlemen had met with every encouragement to tempt them to a voyage to Denmark.

Upon the whole, you will perceive that your letter has done great service of itself; and it has enabled me to open a new battery, which I will mount with the heaviest cannon and mortars I can muster, and will play them as vigorously as possible.

I anxiously expect the next arrival from New-York, in hopes I shall receive the act you refer to respecting the Church in Connecticut, and which his Grace thinks will be necessary to enable him to proceed.

I hope, my dear friend, that I shall be with you in the course of this summer, and be happy with you in the full enjoyment of our holy religion. Make my most affectionate regards to the Clergy as you have opportunity. No one esteems them more, or loves them more than I do: They are the *salt* which must now preserve our Church from all decay, and in perfect health and soundness.

I shall wait on his Grace on Wednesday—this is Monday—and if I am fortunate enough to see him, shall put a note for you into the mail which will close on Wednesday night for New-York.

Believe me to be

Your ever affectionate friend,
and very humble servant,

SAMUEL SEABURY.

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[NO. X.]

LETTER TO THE REV. MR. JARVIS.

LONDON, MAY 24, 1784.

MY DEAR SIR,

BY the last packet I wrote to you as Secretary of the Episcopal Convention in Connecticut, under cover to Mr. Ellison at New-York, and a day or two after by a vessel to Rhode-Island, under cover to Mr. Jona. Starr, of New-London. Both which letters, I flatter myself, will get safe to you. Since those letters I have had two interviews with his Grace of Canterbury, the last this morning. He declares himself ready to do every thing in his power to promote the business I am engaged in; but still thinks that an act of Parliament will be necessary to enable him to proceed; and also that the act of the Legislature of your State, which you mentioned would be sent me by Mr. Leaming, is absolutely necessary on which to found an application to Parliament. I pleased myself with the prospect of receiving the copy of that act by the last packet, the letters of which arrived here the 15th inst.; but great was my mortification, that no

letter came to me from my good and ever dear friends. What I shall do I know not, as the business is at a dead stand without it; and the Parliament is now sitting. If the next arrival does not bring it, I shall be at my wits end. Send it therefore, by all means even after the receipt of this letter; or if you have sent it, send a duplicate.

His Grace says he sees no reason to despair; but yet that matters are in such a state of uncertainty that he knows not how to promise any thing. He complains of the people in power; that there is no getting them to attend to any thing in which their own party interest is not concerned. This is certainly the worst country in the world to do business in. I wonder how they get along at any rate. But if I had the act of your State which you refer to in your letter, I should be able to bring the matter to a crisis, and it would be determined, one way or the other. And as it is attended with uncertainty whether I shall succeed here, I have in two or three letters to Mr. Leaming, requested to know, whether in case of failure here, it would be agreeable to the Clergy in Connecticut that I should apply to the nonjuring Bishops in Scotland, who have been sounded and declare their readiness to carry the business into execution. I hope to receive instructions on this head by the next arrival, and in the mean time must watch occasions as they rise.

Believe me, there is nothing that is not base that I would not do, nor any risk that I would not run, nor any inconvenience to myself, that I would not encounter, to carry this business into effect: And I assure you, if I do not succeed, it shall not be my fault.

There is one piece of intelligence we have heard from Nova-Scotia that gives me some uneasiness, viz: that Messrs. Andrews, Hubbard and Scovil are expected in Nova-Scotia this summer, with a large proportion of their congregations. This intelligence operates against me. For if these gentlemen cannot, or if they and their congregations do not choose to stay in Connecticut, why should a Bishop go there? I answer one reason of their going is the hopes of enjoying their religion fully, which they cannot do in Connecticut without a Bishop.

I beg my most respectful regards may be made to the Clergy of Connecticut, and that they will believe me to be anxiously engaged in the fulfilment of their wishes in the business of the Episcopate proposed.

Believe me to be, dear Sir,
your hearty well wisher, and
very humble servant.

SAMUEL SEABURY.



FOR THE CHURCHMAN'S MAGAZINE.

HEATHEN MORALITY.

[Continued from page 120.]

BE slow in deliberation, but quick in execution.

When you ask the advice of any one in the conduct of your affairs, consider in the first place how he manages his own; for he

who conducts badly for himself, will never be a good counsellor in the business of another.

If you consider well the mischiefs of rashness, you will learn to take prudent counsel : For when we have experienced the miseries of sickness, we take more prudent care of our health.

Qualify thyself for superiority over others, yet conduct towards them as if thou wert but an equal ; so wilt thou appear to cultivate justice, not from weakness, but a sense of equity.

Prefer honest poverty to unjust gain : For justice is better than wealth, inasmuch as the latter can profit us only while we live, but the former may procure us glory after death ; the latter may fall to the share of the very worst men, but the former can be possessed only by the virtuous.

Envy none who are enriched by unjust lucre, but make much of those who from their love of justice suffer wrong : For the just, if in nothing else they excel the unjust, are certainly superior in hope.

Provide carefully for every thing which may contribute to thy well-being in life, especially be intent upon the improvement of thy understanding. For the greatest thing among smaller is a good mind in a sound body.

Be ever active in body, and studious in mind ; that by the one thou mayest execute thy determinations, and by the other know how to provide for thy future good.

Study well what thou art about to say, for there are many whose tongues outrun their thoughts.

Have but two occasions of speaking, the one, of subjects well understood, the other, of those necessary to be spoken. In these two cases alone is speech preferable to silence ; in all others it is better to be silent than to speak.

Consider that nothing human is stable ; hence thou wilt learn not unduly to exult in prosperity, nor to be confounded by adversity.

It is thy duty to rejoice in prosperity, and with firmness endure calamity ; and each without ostentation. For it is absurd to lay open our minds to the observation of every one, while with caution we conceal our wealth.

Avoid just reprehension more cautiously than danger : For formidable as death to the wicked should be an ignominious life to the virtuous. Fate has, as it were, condemned all to death, but by the constitution of things the good alone can be honoured in death.

CHRISTIAN BIOGRAPHY.

THE LIFE OF ST. MATTHEW.

ST. Matthew was a native of Galilee, and a publican, or a tax-gatherer under the Romans. He was collector of the customs at the port of Capernaum, a maritime town, on the sea of Galilee. His office consisted in collecting the taxes upon all goods that were there imported or exported, and receiving the tribute which all passengers by water are obliged to pay. The occupation of a publican was

a most* invidious employment, and to the Jews was peculiarly odious and detestable, as they had been so long free, and so indignantly supported the Roman yoke. In passing through Capernaum our Lord saw this worthy publican situated in the tax-gatherer's office, and by his perfect knowledge of the human heart, for the evangelist John tell us he wanted no information concerning any one's character, knowing him to be a person of virtuous and amiable dispositions, he said to him, *follow me*. Upon this invitation he instantly arose and mingled in his train. But undoubtedly his conscientious regards to the common obligations of justice would induce him to secrete nothing, but to deliver in his accounts in an upright manner to those who had employed him. We afterwards find this Apostle making a grand entertainment at his house, to which he invited Jesus and a great number of publicans and their friends; apparently with this good design; that by the personal converse of Jesus, their prejudices against him might be softened or removed, that they might have an happy opportunity of seeing the amiable endowments which distinguished him, and consequently be disposed to think favourably of him for relinquishing his employment to follow such an instructor. This benevolent design of Matthew, one may conjecture, had all its effects; for we afterwards find the publicans among our Lord's auditors, and devoutly attending his ministry. From the time of this invitation to be his follower and disciple, Matthew continued with Jesus Christ; distinguished with the honour of being one of his twelve Apostles, a familiar attendant on his person, a spectator of his public and private conduct, an hearer of his discourses, a witness of his temper and morals, and an evidence of his resurrection. After our Saviour's assumption, he was along with the other Apostles at Jerusalem; and on the day of Pentecost, was endowed with spiritual gifts and miraculous powers. He was crowned with martyrdom, as is commonly believed, in Æthiopia, in a city called Nadabbar, or Nad-daver. The testimonies of ancient writers concerning him and his gospel may be seen in that most accurate and useful work of the learned and judicious Dr. Lardner, entitled, the *Credibility of the Gospel History*, in supplement vol. 1. p. 95. 2d edition, 1760. Learned men are not agreed about the exact time in which St. Matthew published his gospel. If Irenæus may be relied upon, who expressly declares that Matthew published his gospel when Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome, it must have been when Paul was in that city the second time; about the year of Christ 64; the time when Nero persecuted the Christians. Baronius, Grotius, Vossius, Jones, and the late learned professor Wetstein, concur in the opinion that it was published in the year 41, about eight years after our Saviour's ascension. Dr. Henry Owen, in his late *Observations on the Four Gospels*, hath fixed the date of its publication much earlier; about the year of Christ 38, the second of Caligula, and the fifth from our Lord's assumption. But though learned men differ in ascertaining

* Theocritus being once asked, which was the most cruel of all beasts, made answer: that among the wild beasts of the forest they were the Lion and the Bear: but among the beasts of the city, they were the Parasite and Publican.

the time in which St. Matthew wrote, yet all antiquity is unanimously agreed, that this evangelist compiled his gospel for the service of the Jews in Palestine, to confirm those who believed, and to convert, if possible, those who believed not.

SELECT THOUGHTS, &c.

His pity gave, ere charity began.—GOLDSMITH.

IN the portrait of an almost perfect character drawn by the hand of the inimitable Goldsmith, this may be considered as one of the most striking features. It addresses itself to the heart; and we immediately perceive the propriety of it, though few are constrained to "go and do likewise."

Mankind in general, when they see their fellow creatures reduced to want, must stop to enquire into the causes which brought the evil upon them; and should they find, that they have been involved by their own indiscretion, they are sure to feel all that coldness and disdain, which the most barbaric apathy could dictate. Their hearts feel as little impression from the cries of the needy, as do the ragged rocks from the balmy dew, which gently trickles down their adamant cheeks.

This Zemblan frigidity of heart is the more shocking when its traces are discerned in the conduct of those who are renowned for their acquisition in human literature; and who also profess the benevolent religion of Jesus. It may perhaps be objected, that this is not observable in the character last stated. Would to God the objection were always true. But, are there not men found, swimming in affluence, apparently zealous supporters of the religion of their country, in short possessing every ostensible advantage of becoming "mild and tractable to man," who live thoughtless of their suffering brethren, and who, in the language of the wise man, have not kindness even to *lend to the Lord*!

How unlike is the disposition of such, to that of the venerable Redeemer of man, who bid flow his vital current to wash even his murderers from pollution!

In fine, it may be stated as an axiom, that he who will not relieve the suffering, of whatever description, when he has it in his power, only wishes for a pretext to brood over his ill-gotten, misimproved wealth; and, in the worship of Mammon, to cheat his God of that service, which is his due! These base born souls may possibly receive a sordid gratification, like the dog in the manger; but can never taste those refined pleasures, which are only possessed by the benevolent and sympathetic.

ON THE BEING OF A GOD.

HOW irrational the history of Atheists! for, that God exists, the universe bears the most ample testimony. Not a section, not a page in the vast and instructive volume of nature which lies open before us, but inculcates the doctrine. At home, abroad, in the most public or solitary employments and conditions, we are

presented with the evidence of divine existence. Every object from the least grain of sand, to the globe itself; from the crawling worms to the immortal Newton, who explored the celestial world, is God's witness before the bar of reason. To be atheists in practice is easy, but to be atheists in theory is a hard work indeed. How blind, stupid, and brutish is the real atheist! Who shall attempt to reason with the senseless monster, while he discards the divine existence, and wantonly tramples upon all the reason in the universe? He who cannot see God every where, and in every object of nature, must expect to grope in the obscurity of darkness; for criminal ignorance and fatal blindness has clouded and sealed his eyes. Blessed be God, atheists are not beyond the influence of his almighty arm. He can with a word enlighten their minds, change their hearts, and teach them to adore his majesty at the altar of devotion. Since there is evidence of God's existence, it is manifest that we are absolutely in his hands, and can expect no protection but from his agency. To oppose God, then, is fruitless if not dangerous. If he resolve to kill us, we must die; and if he determines to spare us, we shall live.—For who can prevent the execution of his irresistible and irreversible decree?

REMARKS ON PRIDE.

WHEN we look at a field of corn we find those stalks which raise their heads highest, are the emptiest. The same is the case with men: those who assume the greatest consequence, have generally the least share of judgment and ability.

There is no vice more insupportable and more universally hated than pride; it is a kind of poison which corrupts all the good qualities of a man, and whatever merit he otherwise possesses, this alone is sufficient to render him odious and contemptible; so that pleasing himself too much he displeases every one else. Pride is the first vice that takes possession of the heart, because it derives its source from self-love; and it is the last that remains, whatever efforts may be made to expel it.

ANECDOTE OF BISHOP BULL.

BISHOP BULL in his younger years was settled in a Parish where were many Quakers; One of these, who was a noted preacher among them, once accosted Mr. Bull in these words: "George, as for human learning I set no value upon it; but if thou wilt talk scripture, have at thee." Upon which Mr. Bull, willing to come at his confidence, readily answered, "Come on then, friend!" So opening the bible, which lay before them, he fell upon the book of Proverbs, "See'st thou, friend," saith he, Solomon saith in one place, "answer a fool according to his folly;" and in another place, "answer *not* a fool according to his folly;" how dost thou reconcile these two texts of scripture? Why, said the quaker, Solomon don't say so? To which Mr. Bull replied, "Aye, but he doth;" and turning to the places, he soon convinced him. On which the quaker, being much out of countenance, said, "*why then Solomon's a fool;*" which ended the controversy.

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